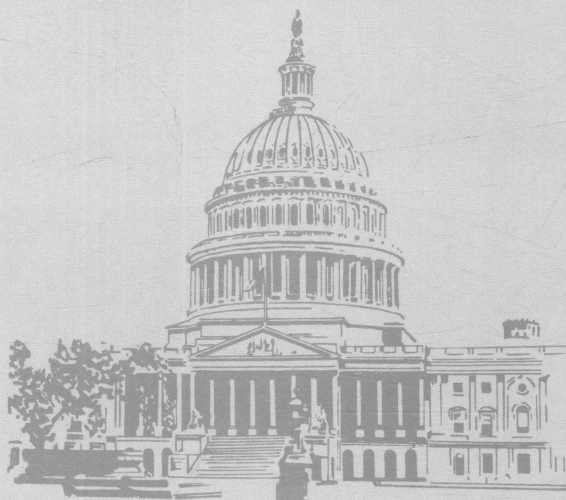


Ohio Farmers' Views on FARM POLICY ISSUES

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LONNIE L. JONES AND JOHN S. BOTTUM¹

INTRODUCTION

This study was conducted to gain a better understanding of farmers' views on farm policy issues. The study indicates what farmers are thinking and to some extent why. It indicates the relative acceptability of various farm policy alternatives, including some old and new program ideas. The results should be useful in predicting farmers' reactions to these programs.

The analysis is based primarily on data collected by the Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology of the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center in November 1964. Approximately 1200 questionnaires were mailed to farm operators randomly selected from six Ohio counties. Of these questionnaires, 289 were completed and returned. These 289 were well distributed by age, farm organization membership, party affiliation, farm size, and other factors representative of the Ohio farm population.

FARMERS' PROGRAM CHOICES

Farm programs of the past have generally been geared toward bringing agricultural supply and demand into balance at a level providing socially acceptable prices to farmers as well as to consumers. This task has largely been left to one or more of four basic approaches. These are:

1. Mandatory supply-management and marketing quota programs.
2. Voluntary land diversion programs, such as the 1964 Feed Grain and 1965 Wheat Programs.
3. Whole-farm or partial farm land retirement programs, such as the Conservation Reserve Program.
4. Free market without government programs.

People usually agree on the desirability of bringing supply and demand into balance. However, they often disagree on the methods to be used. As shown in a later section, this disagreement stems largely from the different goals and objectives of people and different degrees of emphasis they place on various objectives.

Program Preferences

In this study, Ohio farmers were asked which of the above programs they preferred. They could choose one of these programs, any combination, or propose other programs.

In indicating program preferences, 3 percent of the farmers favored a marketing quota program, 24 percent favored voluntary land diversion, 17 percent selected long-term whole-farm or partial farm land retirement, and 41 percent chose the free market with no government programs. Ten percent favored some combination of the above programs and 5 percent suggested other programs (Table 1). Of the farmers who favored some combination, 6 percent indicated a desire for a combination of a land retirement program with no government programs. Some indicated that they felt the land retirement program should be used to make the transition from present farm programs to the free market.

Party Affiliation

Republican and Democratic political parties have differed to varying degrees in the past on their ideas concerning farm programs. This study indicates that neither party has a majority supporting any one of the four basic types of programs.

The widest difference of opinion between members of different parties concerned the voluntary land diversion program. Twenty-seven percent of those indicating they were registered as Democrats favored voluntary land diversion while only 18 percent of those indicating they were registered as Republicans favored this type of program (Table 1). The two groups differed only slightly on the other basic approaches.

In a similar study² in June 1963, farmers were asked questions concerning program preferences identical to those asked in this study. A comparison of these studies shows the groups indicating they were registered as Republicans or not registered shifted away from the extremes of marketing quota programs or the free market. Those indicating they were registered as Democrats moved away from the marketing quota approach but increased their support for free markets. Of those indicating they were registered as Republicans, the proportion favoring the marketing quota approach declined from 6 to 1 percent. Of those indicating they were registered as Democrats, the proportion declined from 20 to 5 percent during the period.

The largest shift away from the free market proposal was made by those indicating they were not registered

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²Bottum, John S. June 1963. An Analysis of the Ohio Vote in the 1963 Wheat Referendum and Farm Policy Implications. Ohio Agricultural Experiment Station, Dept. Ser. A.E. 345.

with either party. In 1963, 65 percent of this group favored a free market compared to 38 percent in the present study.

Farm Organization Membership

Members of the major farm organizations, like members of the major political parties, differed from their national organization's farm program preferences in many instances.

Forty-two percent of those indicating Grange membership favored the free market and none favored marketing quotas. The free market preference differs

somewhat from their national headquarters, which generally tends toward voluntary control programs.

Only 37 percent of the Farm Bureau members favored the free market, even though their national headquarters supports this alternative. One percent of the Farm Bureau members favored marketing quotas.

Of the 25 NFO members who indicated program preferences, 12 favored the free market, 4 land diversion or land retirement, 1 marketing quotas, and 8 a combination of these or some other program.

Only 7 Farmers Union members replied to the questions. Their preferences are presented in Table 1

TABLE 1.—Program Preferences of Farmers by Groupings, 276 Randomly Selected Farm Operators in Six Ohio Counties, November 1964.

Grouping	Number Reporting	Basic Type Program Preferred				
		Marketing Quota	Voluntary Land Diversion	Whole, Partial Farm Land Retirement	Free Market	Combinations and Others *
All Farmers	276	3	24	17	41	15
Age:						
Under 35	38	0	21	8	45	26
36- 44	60	5	28	12	47	8
45- 54	79	4	21	18	38	19
55- 64	61	3	25	20	41	11
65 and over	35	3	23	23	37	14
Farm Size:						
Under 50	20	0	0	44	44	12
50- 99	54	3	31	20	36	10
100- 179	88	1	21	13	50	15
180- 259	47	2	26	11	30	24
260- 499	49	10	23	17	37	13
500- 999	9	0	44	0	22	34
1000 and over	5	0	40	0	40	20
Tenure:						
Owner-Operator	218	3	23	20	40	14
Part Owner	27	0	32	4	40	24
Tenant	43	5	19	10	46	20
Type of Farm:						
Cash Grain	186	3	23	16	42	16
Hogs	110	3	24	11	45	17
Beef	117	4	30	16	38	12
Dairy	71	1	18	15	50	16
Registered as:						
Republican	104	1	18	20	43	18
Democrat	129	5	27	14	39	15
Not Registered	45	3	27	20	38	12
Member of:						
Farm Bureau	104	1	26	17	37	19
N.F.O.	25	4	8	8	48	32
Farmers Union	7	14	43	14	0	29
Grange	54	0	25	13	42	20

* Includes combination of specific programs and others listed by farmers.

† May include a combination of enterprises.

but this number is considered insufficient to be conclusive.

Type of Farm

Dairy farmers' preferences differed from those of other farmers. Of the 71 dairy farmers responding, 50 percent indicated a preference for the free market and 18 percent for voluntary land diversion. Of the cash grain, hog, and beef farmers, 42, 45, and 38 percent preferred the withdrawal of government from agriculture and a return to the free market and 23, 24, and 30 percent favored voluntary land diversion. Preferences for other programs differed only slightly by type of farm.

Other Characteristics

Operator's age, tenure arrangements, and size of farm appeared to have little influence on program preferences (Table 1).

Free Market Consequences

As shown above, more farmers favored a return to the free market than any other single farm program. Farmers were asked how long the transition period for eliminating present programs should be. Of the 41 percent who favored moving to the free market, 61 percent said present programs should be eliminated immediately, 34 percent favored eliminating them over a 2- to 4-year period; and 5 percent favored a 5- to 10-year period.

Fifty-eight percent of all farmers favoring the free market believed net farm incomes would increase if farm programs were eliminated. Moreover, 75 percent of those desiring an immediate elimination of farm programs thought incomes would increase. Some stated that incomes would decline for a short period and then return to present levels or higher. This belief is not in agreement with recent economic

studies (Table 2), which indicate a 19 to 40 percent decline in net farm income in the absence of farm programs.

Each of these studies considered a 3- to 5-year period of transition to the free market. Although there are some variations as to the exact size of change, each projected a substantial decrease in net farm income under a policy of no supports and reduced controls. Estimates for the most recent time period, 1963-1967, indicate that U.S. aggregate net farm income would fall to \$7.6 billion in 5 years, a decline of approximately 40 percent from the 1963 level.

Lower prices would cause this reduction in farm income. The price-suppressing influence of eliminated price supports would be compounded by the release of about 60 million acres of cropland now diverted under various farm programs. The larger acreage of farm land would increase the supply of agricultural products and suppress prices. Further, it is unlikely that consumers would substantially increase consumption in response to lower prices because of the inelastic demand for agricultural commodities. Hence, each study estimates "free prices" well below their present levels for all commodities at the end of a 5-year transition period (Table 2).

Despite the above studies, a considerable number of farmers and others do not believe that this extent or even this direction of change in farm income would take place if farm programs were eliminated.

Objections to Present Programs

Farmers were asked to indicate whether or not they were satisfied with present farm programs and, if not, to voice their objections. The following statements are representative of their objections:

"One side tells you how to grow; the other side pays you not to grow."

TABLE 2.—Estimated Commodity Prices, U.S. Aggregate Net Income, and Percentage Change in Income at the End of Transition Periods under a Free Market Program (No Support and Reduced Control) as Reported in Selected Studies.

Item	USDA and Universities 1960-65	Joint Economic Committee 1960-65	Cornell 1960-65	Iowa Oklahoma 1963-67	Iowa 1961-63
Corn	\$.80	\$.77	\$.98	\$.85	\$.66
Wheat	.90	.87	1.18	.94	.74
Cattle	15.00	17.10	15.00	15.80	12.00
Hogs	11.20	11.00	14.00	13.50	11.00
Milk	3.60	3.67	3.80	3.82	2.67
Net Income (Billion \$)	7.0	7.3	8.9	7.6	—
Percent Change	-38%	-36%	-19%	-40%	—

Source: Kaldor, Donald R. Nov. 1964. The Free Market as a Farm Policy Alternative, Farm Policy in the Years Ahead. A Report of the National Agricultural Advisory Commission. U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Washington, D.C.

"Government sticks its nose in too far."
 "Not fair or beneficial to small family farms—the backbone of U.S.A."
 "Doesn't allow supply and demand to operate."
 "Farm income too low."
 "Does not consider farmers' opinions."
 "Inefficient and too costly. Too much red tape."
 "Allows too many agricultural imports."
 "Programs should be mandatory with higher price support."
 "Not fair to past participants."
 "Not enough participation."
 "Programs are just political footballs."
 "I just don't know. What a mess!"

FARMERS' POLICY OBJECTIVES

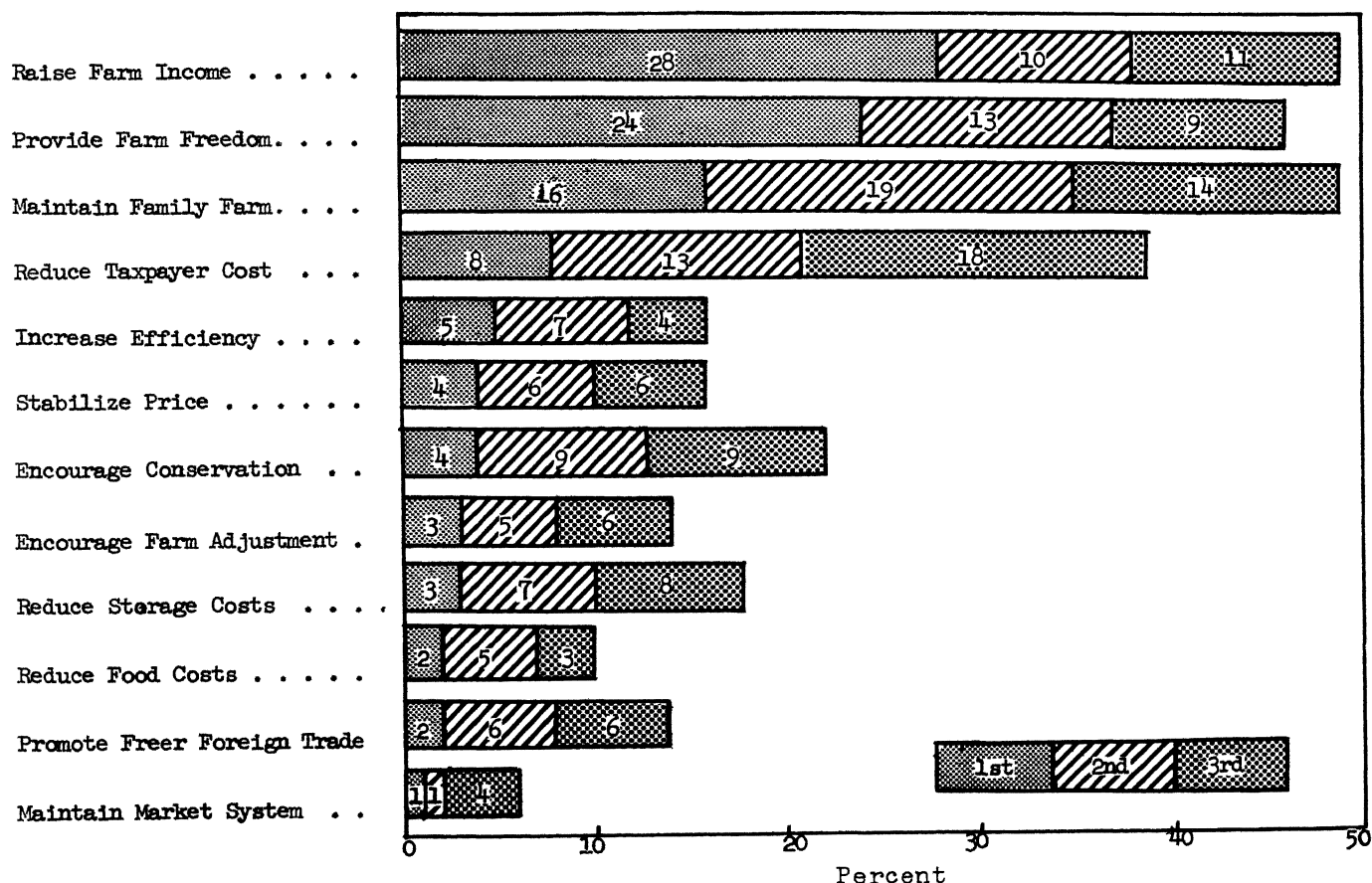
A multitude of farm programs have been proposed in the past. The objectives of these proposals have varied widely.

In this survey, farmers were asked to indicate the farm program objectives they considered most important. Frequently discussed objectives were listed on the questionnaire. Farmers could select those objectives or write in others which they thought should be the main objective of farm programs.

Many of the objectives were similar and related, while others were in conflict. Of the program objectives considered most important, raising farm income was indicated by 28 percent of the farmers, providing farmers freedom to operate by 24 percent, and maintaining the family farm by 16 percent. Among objectives considered second in importance, maintaining the family farm was indicated by 19 percent, reducing taxpayer cost by 13 percent, and providing farm freedom by 13 percent (Figure 1).

Other program objectives considered as third, fourth, and fifth in importance by many farmers were to encourage conservation, increase efficiency, reduce storage costs, and encourage farm adjustments.

Fig. 1.—Percent of farm operators considering selected farm program objectives most important, second most important and third most important, 289 randomly selected Ohio farm operators, November 1964.



Comparison of Opinions on Program Objectives and Program Preferences

Farmers' opinions on program objectives and program preferences were compared to determine the consistency of their objectives and their selection of the appropriate program to carry out these objectives. It appears that in most instances farmers' objectives were consistent with their program choices (Table 3). This may be best revealed by considering the two policy extremes of marketing quotas and the free market.

An important advantage of a marketing quota program to farmers is that it offers higher income to participants. If the program were mandatory, this would mean an income increase to most farmers. Farm income would be increased by limiting the marketing of crops and holding prices high. Hence, participants in the program who shift part of their land out of production would experience higher and more stable income. The size of the increase in farm income to any individual farmer would depend on the level at which prices were supported in association with the size of his marketing quota. These factors would be determined by policy.

Another advantage of the marketing quota approach is that it offers participants price stability within rather narrow limits. In the short run, this program would also tend to maintain the family farm.

The hindrance of the farmer's freedom to operate his farm is probably the most frequently mentioned disadvantage of a marketing quota program. Farmers would be limited in their decisions as to which and how much acreage could be devoted to various crops. This has generally been considered an encroachment on farm operating freedom and has contributed to the

lack of farmer acceptance of mandatory marketing quota programs.

Farmers' preferences for marketing quotas were fairly consistent with their opinions on program objectives (Table 3). Of those farmers desiring the marketing quota program, 75 percent indicated raising farm income as a first objective, 67 percent indicated maintaining the family farm, and 33 percent indicated price stabilization.³ This group of farmers placed less emphasis on farm operating freedom or taxpayer costs. None listed either of these as a first objective. However, operating freedom was indicated as a second objective by all farmers in this group and reducing taxpayer cost was indicated by 50 percent of the group.

The proposal to discontinue price support and production controls and move toward the free market would no doubt offer farmers the greatest operating freedom and taxpayers the least cost. However, it carries less price stability and, as indicated by previously cited studies, the likelihood of reduced farm income.

Farmers who favored the free market were apparently more concerned with operating freedom than any other objective. Sixty-two percent listed farm operating freedom as their first objective and 14 percent listed it as their second objective. The other objective associated with the free market, reducing taxpayer costs, was indicated by 21 percent as a first objective and 25 percent as a second objective.

Most farmers seem to have a good idea about which programs would carry out their objectives.

³Percentages add to more than 100 because farmers could select more than one objective as first, second, or third in importance.

TABLE 3.—Comparison of Farmers' Policy Objectives and Program Preferences, 276 Randomly Selected Farm Operators in Six Ohio Counties, November 1964.

Classification of Farmers by Program Choices	Number Reporting	Farmers' First Objective				
		Stabilize Prices	Provide Freedom to Operate	Raise Farm Income	Maintain Family Farm	Reduce Taxpayer Costs
	(Number)	(Percent)*				
All Farmers	276	4	24	28	16	9
Market Quotas	9	33	0	75	67	0
Voluntary Land Diversion	65	25	25	63	34	21
Whole or Partial Farm Land Retirement	46	7	46	69	24	31
No Government Programs	13	14	62	52	36	21

*Percentages do not total 100 because farmers could select more than one objective as first in importance.

However, there appears to be one major inconsistency between the most important objectives and program preferences of those farmers who favor the no-support, no-control policy and those who want programs to raise farm income. According to the previously cited studies, farm income would decline between 19 and 40 percent during the first 3-5 years if current programs were abolished. Yet 52 percent of the farmers favoring free markets said that raising farm income was their first objective and 13 percent stated this as their second objective. This inconsistency of objectives and program preferences indicates disbelief as to direction of change in farm income if farm programs were eliminated. Another inconsistency was that all farmers who chose the marketing quota program chose freedom to operate as their second most important objective.

Higher Incomes Desired

Farmers were asked if they were satisfied with their present farm income. Eighty percent of the respondents said they were not satisfied. Of these farmers, 92 percent said their farm income should be at least 25 percent higher.

NEW APPROACHES TO FARM PROGRAMS

Questions were included in the study to ascertain farmers' opinions on new approaches to farm programs. Farmers' opinions on some new approaches are presented in Tables 4 and 5.

Early Retirement Program

Farm production control programs of the past usually have been designed to retire land from agricultural production. One new program idea included in this study was concerned with the possibility of retiring low-income families from farming and methods of facilitating the readjustment of these families into either retirement or non-farm employment. The aim of this program would be to reduce agricultural production and alleviate the low-income problems of some families.

The early retirement program would be coupled with a whole-farm cropland retirement program. Under this program, an operator between ages 55 and 65 with a small farm and a low income could retire from farming. In return, he would receive a retirement payment (for example, \$50 per month) until age 65 when he would become eligible for social security. In addition, he could participate in a cropland retirement program. One-third of the farmers favored this program and one-fourth said they would participate if it were offered (Table 4).

Vocational and Technical Retraining

Another new program idea was to provide vocational or technical training for off-farm employment. Farm operators were asked if they would be interested

in attending evening classes for 1 to 2 years if a vocational or technical school were opened in their community. Thirty-six percent said they would if it trained them for a job within their community. Ten percent said they would be interested even if it trained them for a job that required moving out of the community (Table 4).

Tenants were also quite receptive to the retraining program. Fifty-one percent said they would be interested in retraining for jobs within their present community. Only 9 percent were interested in training for jobs outside their community.

As expected, younger farm operators were more interested in retraining than the older operators. Forty-three percent of those under 35 were interested in training for a job within the community. Thirty-three percent of those 55-64 years of age were interested.

Both the early retirement and job retraining programs received stronger support in counties with low farm income. In Vinton County, the total cash receipts per farm averaged \$2,476 in 1963 and in Jefferson County receipts averaged \$3,708. The state average was \$7,910 per farm.

In Vinton County, 63 percent of the farmers favored the early retirement program and 67 percent were interested in retraining program for jobs within their community. Forty percent of the Vinton county farmers were interested in retraining, even if it required relocation outside the community. In Jefferson County, 48 percent of the farmers favored the early retirement program and 52 percent were interested in the within-community retraining program. Twenty-nine percent were interested in training for jobs outside the community.

Government Purchase of Land and Cropping Rights

Two methods of land retirement which might be used as alternatives to land leasing were studied to get an indication of their possible acceptance. Farmers were asked if they would sell their farm to the government and if they would sell the right to produce crops to the government.

Nineteen percent of all farmers said they would sell their farm to the government and 12 percent said they would sell their cropping rights. These percentages were higher in the low-income counties. For example, 50 percent of the farmers in Vinton County said they would sell their farm to the government and 35 percent said they would sell their cropping rights (Table 4). This has implications for the possibility of shifting land to public parks, forests, and other uses.

TABLE 4.—Farmers' Opinions on New Approaches to Farm Programs by Groupings, 289 Randomly Selected Farmers in Six Ohio Counties, November 1964.

Grouping	Number Reporting	New Program Approaches											
		Favor Supply Mgt. for Dairy		Sell Farm to Government		Sell Right to Produce Crops		Early Retirement Program		Training for Job Within Community		Training for Job Outside Community	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
	(Number)	(Percent)											
All Farmers	289	20	80	19	81	12	88	31	69	36	64	10	90
Member of:													
Farm Bureau	104	25	75	14	86	11	89	29	71	36	64	13	87
N.F.O.	25	13	87	41	59	5	95	30	70	35	65	14	86
Farmers Union	7	50	50	17	83	14	86	29	71	40	60	29	71
Grange	54	31	69	16	84	12	88	20	80	33	67	4	96
Registered as:													
Republican	104	18	82	19	81	12	88	26	74	25	75	10	90
Democrat	129	23	77	19	81	11	89	32	68	41	59	10	90
Not Registered	45	15	85	19	81	15	85	38	62	39	61	11	89
Age:													
Under 35	38	17	83	14	86	6	94	33	67	43	57	9	91
36 - 44	63	28	72	17	83	9	91	22	78	39	61	4	96
45 - 54	83	13	87	19	81	17	83	38	62	37	63	16	84
55 - 64	63	23	77	26	74	26	74	33	67	33	67	11	89
65 and over	38	25	75	17	83	12	88	15	85	24	76	12	88
Farm Size:													
Under 50	20	9	91	7	93	25	75	43	57	27	73	0	100
50 - 99	54	12	88	18	82	9	91	45	55	36	64	9	91
100 - 179	88	18	82	14	86	11	89	20	80	43	57	13	87
180 - 259	47	26	74	23	77	13	87	30	70	33	67	6	94
260 - 499	49	23	77	24	76	12	88	33	67	31	69	14	86
500 - 999	9	25	75	11	89	0	100	38	62	50	50	0	100
1000 and over	5	33	67	60	40	40	60	20	80	25	75	20	80
Type of Farm*													
Cash Grain	186	21	79	14	86	11	89	28	72	36	64	8	92
Hogs	110	18	82	16	84	5	95	26	74	32	68	10	90
Beef	117	20	80	22	78	10	90	34	66	42	58	12	88
Dairy	71	14	86	22	78	10	90	21	79	30	70	12	88
Tenure:													
Owner-Operator	218	19	81	22	78	14	86	34	66	33	67	11	89
Part Owner	27	17	83	12	88	8	92	20	80	35	65	4	96
Tenant	43	24	76	6	94	3	97	22	78	51	49	9	91
County:													
Ashland	48	19	81	22	78	10	90	28	72	26	74	8	92
Jefferson	26	20	80	35	65	17	83	48	52	52	48	29	71
Miami	62	22	78	11	89	11	89	41	59	23	77	6	94
Pickaway	52	31	69	19	81	6	94	18	82	31	69	7	93
Putnam	83	7	93	11	89	10	90	21	79	41	59	4	96
Vinton	18	37	63	50	50	35	65	63	37	67	33	40	60

*May include a combination of enterprises.

Supply Management for Dairy

Production control programs to bring supply and demand of dairy products into balance at prices acceptable to producers and consumers have received considerable consideration in Congress.

Twenty percent of all farmers surveyed in this study favored a supply management program for dairy. Of the 71 dairy farmers questioned, only 14 percent favored such a program. Thus, it appears that a supply man-

agement program would have difficulties in obtaining acceptance.

Acreage Allotments vs. Bushel and Pound Quotas

Under a marketing quota program, allotments may be based either on acres or on bushels and pounds. The acreage approach has been used for wheat, cotton, and tobacco. Increased yields per acre and declining quality of some tobacco in recent years raises the

TABLE 5.—Farmers' Opinions on Various Farm Policy Issues by Groupings, 289 Randomly Selected Farmers in Ohio, November 1964.

Grouping	Number Reporting (Number)	Farm Policy Issues								Would Participate in Land Retirement Program	
		Marketing Quotas Based on		Type of Allotment Preferred		Type of Farm Land Retirement					
		Acres	Bushels and Pounds	Single Crop	Whole Farm	Whole	Part	Both	Yes	No	
		(Percent)									
All Farmers	289	54	46	31	69	27	32	41	42	58	
Member of:											
Farm Bureau	104	51	49	26	74	31	25	44	43	57	
N.F.O.	25	74	26	32	68	12	35	53	47	53	
Farmers Union	7	0	100	40	60	14	43	43	66	34	
Grange	54	52	48	21	79	29	31	40	44	56	
Registered As:											
Republican	104	54	46	27	73	35	25	39	45	55	
Democrat	129	56	44	30	70	25	37	38	35	65	
Not Registered	45	49	51	36	64	19	30	51	32	68	
Age:											
Under 35	38	54	46	26	74	14	37	49	34	66	
36 - 44	63	57	44	28	72	23	31	46	30	70	
45 - 54	83	52	48	31	69	35	29	36	39	61	
55 - 64	63	62	38	31	69	32	25	43	52	48	
65 and over	38	63	37	37	63	24	48	28	59	41	
Farm Size:											
Under 50	20	57	43	17	83	29	36	35	50	50	
50 - 99	54	55	45	32	68	38	28	34	42	58	
100 - 179	88	56	44	18	82	23	37	40	37	63	
180 - 259	47	44	56	40	60	13	45	42	41	59	
260 - 499	49	49	51	36	64	36	21	43	47	53	
500 - 999	9	62	38	50	50	33	0	67	55	45	
1000 and over	5	40	60	20	80	25	25	50	40	60	
Tenure:											
Owner-Operator	218	55	45	31	69	28	31	41	45	55	
Part Owner	27	37	63	23	77	38	29	33	35	65	
Tenant	43	71	39	37	63	18	36	46	32	68	
Type of Farm:											
Cash Grain	186	51	49	28	72	23	32	45	46	54	
Hogs	110	51	49	36	64	20	33	47	40	60	
Beef	117	57	43	39	61	27	30	43	48	52	
Dairy	71	48	52	26	74	27	35	38	17	83	

question, "Would allotments on a bushel and pound basis be better?"

Fifty-four percent of all farmers responding to this question favored the acreage basis for quotas and 46 percent favored a bushel and pound basis (Table 5).

Only slight differences were detectable when farmers were grouped. The only noticeable difference of opinion in the farm organization membership grouping was that a higher percentage of the N.F.O. members favored quotas based on acreage. Seventy-four percent of this group preferred the acreage basis compared to 52 and 51 percent in the Grange and Farm Bureau groups. Farmers Union members were 100 percent in favor of the bushel and pound basis. As indicated earlier, however, the number of respondents from this group was considered too small to accurately represent the organization or give conclusive evidence.

Whole-Farm Grain Base vs. Individual Allotments

Another new program approach studied was to replace individual crop acreage allotments with a whole-farm grain base. Under this proposal, a farmer could plant as much or as many crops as he wanted as long as his total grain acreage did not exceed his total base. Farmers growing crops subject to allotments would be allowed more latitude in their farming operations.

This idea received strong support. More than two-thirds of the farmers in the study favored this approach over the individual crop allotment program. Responses showed that support was strong within all groups. Only slight differences were found between organizations, political parties, and farm size. Farmers in the younger age groups were stronger supporters of the proposal than those in older age groups. Cash grain and dairy farmers offered somewhat stronger support for the proposal than beef and hog farmers (Table 5).

Long-Term Cropland Retirement

Forty-two percent of the operators said they would participate in a long-term cropland retirement program similar to the past Conservation Reserve programs. A higher percentage of the farmers from the low-income counties said they would participate. In Vinton County, 69 percent of the farmers said they would take part in a long-term cropland retirement program. In Jefferson County, 45 percent indicated they would participate if the program were offered.

Farmers were asked if they thought grazing of retired acres should be allowed, assuming that payments would be reduced. About one-half favored this idea.

Farmers preferred a combination whole-farm and partial farm land retirement program rather than either alone. Forty-one percent of the farmers responding said the program should include both whole-farm and partial farm land retirement, 32 percent said partial land retirement only, and 27 percent said whole-farm retirement only (Table 5).

SUMMARY

Like any group of individuals, farmers' goals and objectives differ rather widely. These differences in objectives bring about wide variation in farmers' program choices. Moreover, this study indicates some disagreement as to what objectives some programs will accomplish and consequences of the programs.

Although about half of the farmers in this study favor some type of government program for agriculture or a combination of programs, there is little agreement as to the type which should be adopted.

Results from this study indicate that some modification and adjustments in existing program approaches would contribute to their acceptability. Furthermore, there is strong indication that Ohio farmers may be quite receptive to new approaches to the farm problem.